



# Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers

# LOGISTICS

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**Job Overview**

When you are out shopping you may not realize that a wide variety of material-moving workers are involved with moving materials or finished products through the supply and delivery chain, which is part of logistics. Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers (Hand) manually move everything from raw materials to manufacturers or completed merchandise to shipping docks. Products may also be transported through rail and trucking lines to distribution warehouses, and then to your favorite retail store.

Generally, these workers move freight, stock, and other materials to and from storage and production areas, loading docks, delivery vehicles, ships, and containers, or perform other unskilled general labor. Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers may sort materials and supplies and prepare them according to work orders. They may use computer equipment to prepare labels, input data for shipping status, or prepare shipments.

Laborers and Material Movers also use material-moving equipment such as forklifts, electric pallet movers, or hoisting equipment. Their specific duties vary by industry and work setting. For example, in manufacturing plants they may move raw materials to production work areas or load merchandise into trains or onto trucks for delivery to retail stores.

Specialized workers within this group include baggage and cargo handlers or stevedores, who work in transportation industries, and truck loaders and unloaders. Loaders and unloaders use specialized material-moving equipment to transport chemicals or bulk solids, such as coal, sand, or grain into or from trucks.

**Typical Tasks**

- Stevedores, except Equipment Operators**
- Carry or move cargo by handtruck to wharf and stack cargo on pallets to facilitate transfer to and from ship.
  - Stack cargo in transit shed or in hold of ship as directed.
  - Attach and move slings used to lift cargo.
  - Guide load being lifted to prevent swinging.
  - Store cargo in ship’s hold to prevent shifting during voyage.

# Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers

## Freight, Stock, and Material Movers (Hand)

- ➔ Load and unload materials to and from designated storage areas, such as racks and shelves, or vehicles, such as trucks.
- ➔ Stack or pile materials, such as lumber, boards, or pallets.
- ➔ Bundle and band material, such as fodder and tobacco leaves, using banding machines.
- ➔ Sort and store items according to specifications.
- ➔ Assemble product containers and crates, using hand tools and precut lumber.
- ➔ Attach identifying tags or mark information on containers.
- ➔ Adjust or replace equipment parts, such as rollers, belts, plugs and caps, using hand tools.
- ➔ Record number of units handled and moved, using daily production sheet or work tickets.

*Detailed descriptions of these occupations may be found in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) at [online.onetcenter.org](https://online.onetcenter.org).*

## Important Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

- ➔ Equipment Selection — Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job.
- ➔ Reading Comprehension — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- ➔ Installation — Installing equipment, machines, wiring, or programs to meet specifications.
- ➔ Production and Processing — Knowledge of raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.
- ➔ Engineering and Technology — Knowledge of the practical application of engineering science and technology. This includes applying principles, techniques, procedures, and equipment to the design and production of various goods and services.
- ➔ Mechanical — Knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.
- ➔ Manual Dexterity — The ability to quickly move your hand, your hand together with your arm, or your two hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble objects.
- ➔ Information Ordering — The ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
- ➔ Dynamic Strength — The ability to exert muscle force repeatedly or continuously over time. This involves muscular endurance and resistance to muscle fatigue.
- ➔ Trunk Strength — The ability to use your abdominal and lower back muscles to support part of the body repeatedly or continuously over time without ‘giving out’ or fatiguing.
- ➔ Extent Flexibility — The ability to bend, stretch, twist, or reach with your body, arms, and/or legs.
- ➔ Static Strength — The ability to exert maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects.
- ➔ Oral Comprehension — The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.

# Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers

## Work Environment

Many Laborers and Material Movers work outdoors in all types of weather conditions. They do repetitive and physically demanding work. They may lift and carry heavy objects, and stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl in awkward positions. Workers in this occupation typically work eight-hour shifts, although longer shifts are also common. In many industries that operate around the clock, Laborers and Material Movers work evening or graveyard shifts. Some may work at night to prevent the disruption to customers during normal business hours.

Many Stevedores are members of a union, such as the International Longshore and Warehouse Union or the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

## California's Job Outlook and Wages

The California Outlook and Wage table below represents the occupation across all industries.

Standard Occupational Classification	Estimated Number of Workers 2004	Estimated Number of Workers 2014	Average Annual Openings	2006 Wage Range (per hour)
<b>Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers (Hand)</b>				
53-7062	282,900	333,800	14,340	\$8.20 to \$12.80

*Wages do not reflect self-employment.*

*Average annual openings include new jobs plus net replacements.*

*Source: [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov), Employment Projections by Occupation and OES Employment & Wages by Occupation, Labor Market Information Division, Employment Development Department.*

## Trends

There will be numerous job openings in this occupation due to its large size and high turnover, which is common for jobs requiring little formal training. There is a continuous need to replace workers who transfer to other occupations, retire, or leave the labor force for other reasons. Employment of Laborers and Material Movers is expected to grow at a faster than average rate from 2004 to 2014. Temporary help agencies employ the largest number of workers in this occupation. This employment trend will increase as more employers contract out these services.

## Training/Requirements/Apprenticeships

Laborers and Material Movers jobs require little work experience or specific training. Workers usually develop skills by learning from more experienced workers or supervisors. Some employers prefer applicants with a high school diploma, but most want workers at least 18 years of age who are able to meet the physical demands of the work. Employers may require applicants to pass a physical exam, undergo drug testing, and/or background checks prior to employment. As a result of the significant physical requirements, limited training, and low pay, these workers are frequently younger than workers in other occupations.

### Recommended High School Course Work

High school preparation courses in language arts, mathematics, and computer technology are helpful.

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## Where Do I Find the Job?

Direct application to employers remains one of the most effective job search methods. Use the *Search for Employers by Industry* feature on the *Career Center* page at [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov) to locate employers in your area. Search under the following industry names to get a list of private firms and their addresses:

- ➔ All Other Durable Goods Merchant
- ➔ Couriers
- ➔ Employment Placement Agencies
- ➔ Fruit & Vegetable Merchant
- ➔ General Warehousing and Storage
- ➔ Jewelry Merchant Wholesalers
- ➔ Other Grocery Product Merchant
- ➔ Professional Employer Organizations

Search these **yellow page** headings for listings of private firms:

- ➔ Delivery Service
- ➔ Freight Forwarding
- ➔ Grocers & Markets - Wholesale
- ➔ Stevedoring Contractors
- ➔ Trucking

## Where Can the Job Lead?

It is common for workers to start in this occupation before being promoted to a better-paying and more highly-skilled job. Some may eventually advance to supervisor.

### Related Occupations

Driver/Sales Workers (see Logistics Profile)  
Forklift Operators (see *Occupational Guide No. 190*)  
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators (see Logistics Profile)  
Material Moving Workers (see Logistics Profile)  
Procurement Clerks  
Purchasing Agents  
Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks (see Logistics Profile)  
Stock Clerks (see Logistics Profile)  
Truck Drivers, Heavy (see Logistics Profile)  
Truck Drivers, Light, or Delivery Services (see Logistics Profile)

## Other Sources

Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals  
[www.cscmp.org](http://www.cscmp.org)

International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
[www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org)

International Longshore and Warehouse Union  
[www.ilwu.org](http://www.ilwu.org)

National Association of Manufacturers  
[www.nam.org](http://www.nam.org)

Pacific Maritime Association  
[www.pmanet.org](http://www.pmanet.org)